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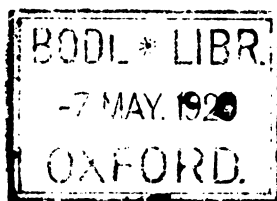
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**THE SPACIOUS TIMES  
AND OTHERS  
By FRANCIS COUTTS**

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**THE SPACIOUS TIMES  
AND OTHERS**





# THE SPACIOUS TIMES AND OTHERS

## THE NEW PISGAH

**METHOUGHT** I heard the passionate heart of Man

Crying for revelation. The still, small

Voice, that every listening soul hears call,

Bids or forbids, but never tells the plan

Of human life ; the process that began

Millions of years ago, the rise and fall

Of nations, conflict of religions, all

The vast vicissitude's unfinished span.

## 10 THE SPACIOUS TIMES

Now have the Seven Angels blown their loud

Trumpets and poured on Earth their vials of

woe ;

The sea is blood ; the sun wrapped in a shroud.

Is this the crisis of the ascending, slow

Anguish of Man ? The summit, where the cloud

Shall hide no more the Promised Land below ?

1915.

## EPHPHATHA

I WOULD, my Country, that your mind were cleared

To see with keen imaginative eyes

Reality, undimmed by filmy lies

Fanatic or political, nor bleared

By native fogs of custom, long endeared

To those who hate prevision ; then would rise

Before your gaze majestic surmise

Of the war's meaning, which has long appeared

To Prussia's other foes, but yet are hid

This hour from you ; because so long you lay



12      THE SPACIOUS TIMES

Encrusted like a buried chrysalid,

Closed from the living light by walls of clay ;

Now summoned by the trump of doom and bid

To watch God out of darkness making day.

*May*, 1916.

## “THE SPACIOUS TIMES”

ON for the sovereign days of good Queen Bess,  
Her government, its force and strength of will  
Against her enemies, her steadfast skill  
To baffle them and bring them to distress !  
With varying winds of Politics or Press,  
On devious course we veer ; or else (worse ill,  
If worse there be) we stagnate in a still  
Ocean of doubt, in stately helplessness.

But if the Faery Queen could come to reign  
And choose her Council of the men who act,

14      THE SPACIOUS TIMES

We should be sure of war not waged in vain,  
Nor homes made empty nor the cataract  
Of blood poured out for nothing ; she again  
Would countervail the Hanseatic Pact.  
*June, 1916.*

## TO THE BELGIANS

Your gratitude to us ? You owe us none ;

For how could we refuse to bring you aid,

Or consolation for the price you paid

For all the noble things that you have done ?

You bore the bitter brunt, and might have won,

Had we been ready ; you the foe delayed

While we our tardy preparation made,

And all alone you fought the frantic Hun.

But when the end shall be and peace proclaimed,

When the colossal Victory is crowned,

16      THE SPACIOUS TIMES

Then, among all the nations the most famed,

    You, though the smallest, shall be surely found

Chief of the greatest, and your courage named

    Among the glories that the world astound.

*December, 1915.*

## TO AMERICA ALOOF

A BOUNDLESS prairie, full of laughing wheat,

A lake that joins the limit of the sky,

Gigantic rivers, mountains huge and high,

Great harbours, with their merchant freight and fleet,

Great cities, where each market-place and street

With trade are cumbered—these astound the eye

With splendour and the mind can purify

From meaner thought, the nobler thought to greet.

Why, then, since this magnificence is yours,

Cannot you comprehend with insight true

18      THE SPACIOUS TIMES

The conflict which your kindred race endures

In Freedom's cause, a cause once dear to you ?

Alas, luxurious safety oft allures

The clearest vision from an honest view.

*March*, 1916.

## TO AMERICA AT WAR

THE greatest nations of the Earth,  
Of the English-speaking race,  
Have well remembered of their birth  
And taken heart of grace  
To fight their common foe, the Beast  
Who raised his horns on high  
And thought to conquer West and East  
And all the world defy.

Between the twain great waters rolled,  
And, though they were akin,  
One was the New and one the Old ;



Yet, Liberty to win,  
They both had fought a strenuous fight  
And once each other fought ;  
So now for Honour and for Right  
They Right and Honour sought.

Great Britain first was in the field,  
And fame and glory won ;  
She stood for France, a steadfast shield  
Against the invading Hun ;  
America long held aloof ;  
'Twas hidden from her mind  
That she must fight the Cloven Hoof,  
The Enemy of mankind.

But when she learned the truth at last,

There was no long delay ;

She mustered all her force, and fast

She armed her for the fray ;

America, to thee all hail !

No more to say farewell,

We, of one kindred, shall avail

Against these fiends of Hell ;

Ay, and to hurl them back again

To whence they came at first,

To sear the world with nameless pain,

By cruelties accurst ;

To hurl them back and bolt them in,

That they no more assail ;

Theirs be the punishment of sin ;

America, all hail !

*July, 1917.*

## PER DOMUM AD DEUM

**DIM** are the days ; not to the outward sight,

But to the inward vision dim, obscure,

Fraught with the sense of all things insecure,

Of mountains moving, seas advancing, light

Itself ambiguous, as in ancient fight

With demon darkness. Will our homes endure,

Or will the Abomination foul their pure

Altars, where now the fragrant fire burns bright ?

Yet some there are, perchance from love of fame

Professing loftier morals, who condemn

The love of home and country, crying shame

On all who love not God alone. To them

Martha and Mary would have been to blame,

And Jesus weeping o'er Jerusalem.

1916.

## TO AN ANTI-COMPULSION DEMAGOGUE

CHEAP-JACK of words, purveyor of false thought,  
You higgle-haggle while your comrades die ;  
“ Men and munitions ” was their bitter cry ;  
You gave them neither ; but one thing you sought—  
To keep the power that with your tongue you  
bought ;  
Yes, for you sold yourself ; the mob will buy  
Your clap-trap always, always pay your lie  
With the applause you love. Your brethren fought

At Mons and on the Marne, or by the sea,

Near where the tides race roaring down the  
strait,

Past the bare mountains of Gallipoli ;

For you and yours they fought ; O fool ingrate,  
Would curs like you, unworthy to be free,

Might feel the fury of the Prussian hate !

*January, 1916.*

## TO THE STRIKERS

You bring dishonour on the British race,

You, traitors to your country, by a deed

Of unimagined meanness. Britons breed

Few men like you, thank God ; for your disgrace

Shadows the land and darkens every face

With shame that your unmitigated greed

Should think to profit by your brethren's need,

Whose bravery but serves to make you base.

How the heart sickens that these things are done

In this black passage of the world's dim way,

Now when the streams of France and Belgium run

Red with the blood of those whom you betray,

Now when the Powers of Darkness smite the sun,

And Force and Freedom close in final fray.



## THE STRIKE ON THE CLYDE

THE Iser once rolled red with blood,  
With blood the Meuse was dyed,  
But black dishonour stains the flood  
For ever of the Clyde.

## A PREACHER OF PEACE AND RECONCILIATION

WHY do we tolerate this traitor ? Why

Suffer this gas-bag to pollute the air

And take poor lads and weaklings unaware ?

He is more noisome than the meanest spy

Shot at the Tower, who dared at least to die

In service of his country ; but no care

Has this man for his Motherland ; why spare

Cowards who propagate a treasonous lie ?

Liar he is, true to his party creed ;

Being no fool, he knows, howe'er he rave,

That Prussia's brutal and outrageous greed,

Her arrogant ambition to enslave

The world, alone have caused the war. What need

Has Britain of this arrant caitiff knave ?

## TO THE PACIFISTS

So you would make the sacrifices vain,

The sorrow void ; let all that wealth of woe

Be wasted, and the Prussian murderers go

Unpunished. See, the thick-sown fields of slain

And wandering coffin-waters of the main

Teem forth the dead, who, in procession slow

Passing before you, cry, " We fought the foe,

Defending you and yours ; we died to gain

Safety for you ; now (base ingratitude !)

You pule and palter for a futile peace,

Before the enemy for peace has sued :

First bind him fast and let him pray release,

Enforcing terms no cunning can elude ;

Only that way can you make war to cease."

## THE CONSCIENTIOUS SHIRKER

WOULD you the Scribes and Pharisees have braved,

Knowing the death that afterwards they urged ?

Would you the money-lending thieves have  
scourged

Out of the Temple ? Would you not have saved

Your life by lying, when the High Priest craved

To hear the truth ? When Pontius Pilate purged

His hands from blood, would no appeal have  
surged

From your pale heart, nor your pale lips have raved

With supplication ? Strive no more to hide

Your cowardice with words, however great

The authority ; for deeds alone provide

The great example ; Christ, who chose his fate,

To die for spiritual freedom, died

That men might try his life to imitate.

## TO ENGLAND

WHEN the agony is done and you are free

To lay aside the sword, when all but those

Who died to save you from your ruthless foes

Come home, what will you be ?

Will you be honest with yourself at last,

And look the world full in its ugly face,

Unboastful of your goodness and your grace,

When this ordeal is past ?

Will you have judgment, with clear, pain-purged

sense,



To weigh things in the balance ? Some that  
seem

Of large significance will kick the beam,  
Like coins of false pretence ;

Others, in aspect dull, with no display  
To tempt ambition, will draw down the scale,  
However counterpoised ; and not for sale  
At any cost are they.

Why do you suffer anguish ? Not for forms  
Religious or political you care  
Now ; but for Freedom, and your Homes you  
dare  
To brave these storms.

Keep then in sight what war has made you see ;

Think no small thoughts again ; not faint nor far

Shines, like the star of Bethlehem, your star

Of glorious destiny.

## TO GREAT BRITAIN

If thou forget again, as in thy day

Of proud prosperity thou didst forget,

The things belonging to thy peace, regret

Will not avail thee for thy strength and stay,

When all thy greatness shall have passed away

And thou among thine enemies art set,

Like Samson, for derision ; with thy debt

Of vengeance due, but with no power to pay.

Cast not aside thine armour or thy sword,

When thou hast won the fight ; the foe has sworn

To humble thee, because thou art the Lord

Of Ocean and of thee was Freedom born ;

All wilt thou lose for which thy fathers warred,

If thou again thy prophets dare to scorn.

*December, 1915.*

## WEIGHED IN THE BALANCE

HEREAFTER, when the dread ordeal is past,

What shall we be ? Before, we were a race

Torn by internal quarrels, with no grace

Of large imagination, to forecast

A destiny made fair by holding fast

The custom of our ancestors, to face

Stern facts ; if we should abdicate our place

In the great world again, 'twould be the last

Of our stupidities. Forbearing Fate

Upholds the level scales, with pitying smile,

Which carry, on one side, our folly's weight ;

His patience on the other ; yet, some while,

The judge must cease to be compassionate,

If we persist in adding to our pile.

## THE CAUSE

THOUGH men are sad, when they at last confess

That they have grown too agéd to do aught

But warm themselves and dream of all they  
wrought

Ere Time condemned them to loathed idleness,

More sad is he (although his years be less,

Too old for arms) who never has been taught

To help his Home-land ; most in need when  
caught

In dragon jaws of war and war's distress.

When Peace descends with healing on her wings

For all the wounds of Prussian perfidy,

Let British children learn to do the things

That make an Empire One and keep it Free ;

So every generation, as it springs

To power, devoted to that Cause shall be.



## A NATIONAL ANTHEM

I WISH, my Country, I could make a song  
That all who truly love you would delight  
To sing and sing again. The men who fight  
For home and honour, as they march along  
Would peal it forth ; and often, clear and strong,  
Voices of boys and maidens would unite  
To chorus it and celebrate your might  
In grapple with foul fraud and cruel wrong.

Once in Provence I heard the approaching sound  
Of a great multitude. I turned my gaze

On the long road, where up the hill they wound,

Peasants *en fête* ; then burst a song in praise

Of valour from their lips ; the fair French ground

Trembled for pleasure ; 'twas the Marseillaise.

## TO LORD KITCHENER OF KHARTOUM

BRITAIN awaits your word ; for you alone,  
Now in the time when her best sons have bled  
For Liberty, she trusts ; you were not bred  
In Casuistry's Temple, and you own  
Allegiance but to God and to the Throne  
And to your Country. Now the wounded,  
dead,  
And maimed, whose blood for Britain has been  
shed,  
Demand the harvest that their blood has sown.

Widows and stricken mothers bid you send

The reapers forth, still hoping your command

That not in vain should come to such an end

The lives they loved. Oh, Sir, lift up your hand

And signal, "Now must every man defend

(If he have strength) his home and native land."

*November, 1915.*

## LORD KITCHENER OF KHARTOUM

How shall our half-dumb sorrow raise an ode

Or elegy, expressive of this death ?

The great catastrophe is like a load

That weighs upon the heart and chokes the  
breath.

He was the man most trusted in the land ;

In his clear nature there was no dim light,

He knew how to obey and to command ;

Learning the obligation gave the right.

Obedience to duty was his gauge

To measure life ; by that he measured men ;

Have not the brave and wise in every age

By that same virtue wielded sword and pen ?

Beneath that blood-stained sea of wreck, where still

The battleships of Britain, masters, ride,

He sank ; may his indomitable will

Live on in us, and govern us and guide.



## EDITH CAVELL

NEVER to be forgotten is this deed

Of vilest villainy ; fanatic Spain

Would scarce have done it, in her days of vain  
Glory ; 'tis fouler than the foulest fee'd  
Assassination Kings have e'er decreed,

To prop a tottering throne. What deeper stain  
Can dye a nation's honour ? She was slain  
Because she pitied those in pity's need.

Brave martyr to thy faith in that fine skill  
And careful faculty of doing good

Which fiends deride, who only love to kill,

But which in heaven, divinely understood,

Has jealous friends, God bring thy foes to ill,

Confound their counsels and avenge thy blood.

*October, 1915.*



## TO THE LADIES OF ENGLAND

FINE furs and flounces, frills and furbelows,

Fine plumes and velvet, broideries and lace,

Fine frocks for figure and fine hats for  
face ;

For such extravagance the money flows,

As if our battles could be won by clo'es ;

And finery flaunted in a public place

Or pictured in the press is no disgrace,

Though Britain writhes with pain of wounds and  
woes.

TO THE LADIES OF ENGLAND 53

Now while the grip of war the realm doth hold,

Now, once for all, this waste repudiate,

Not by the specious argument cajoled

Of large employment lost ; anticipate

The time when vanities no more are sold

And every farthing shall be big with fate.

## THE FASHION PLATE

SHAME on you, ladies, who, for love of praise

Or some fair rival's frock to emulate,

Study the meretricious Fashion Plate

Or send to Paris for the newest craze

Of costume ; other thoughts, and other ways

Of spending wealth, the dreadful hours dictate,

And Death alone, in crimson robes of State,

Should win the worship of the public gaze.

But if you wish to show the world good sense,

Design a national vesture ; such a robe

Of simple folds as once the Grecian dame  
And then the Roman deemed magnificence,  
Being their mark of birth ; o'er all the globe  
Bear you like emblem of Great Britain's  
fame.

## THE USE OF WAR

WHENE'ER, the final battle won,

Excursions and alarms are over,

We may be sure the usual sun

Will gild the wheat and dye the clover,

And whatsoe'er the war may bring

Of loss or lesson you or me-ward,

'Tis safe to say the birds will sing

And every river ripple seaward.

Whate'er our armies may have had,

Both owls and mice will have their rations,

And not a weasel be more sad

For all the madness of the nations ;

Imperial Nature will proceed

In just the same old-fashioned manner,  
And send her legions forth to feed  
And fight for food beneath her banner.

From Nature's force all forces flow,

So Man must needs obey her orders ;  
Although he fancies long ago  
He broke her bonds and crossed her borders,  
In fact he wanders round and round  
And vainly lights his feeble tapers,  
To see his way beyond the ground  
Where she compels his clownish capers.

And therefore, do you think, my friend,  
That when at last our foes go under,

The follies of our blood will end

And we no more shall boast and blunder ?

Do you suppose that to a plane

Of life more high and intellectual

Britain will suddenly attain,

When she has made her arms effectual ?

No ; Nature, as I apprehend,

Leads us to waste our breath on chatter,

Our eyes on glittering gauds, and spend

Our strength on things that do not matter,

Till, lest we sink, no more to rise,

She stops our blathering and our blinking

With a new war (that old surprise)

And sets us for a while a-thinking.

# THE THAMES

## I

RIVER the best beloved of all that flow,  
Whom spires of Oxford, towers of London crown,  
River of England's record and renown,  
Under the Bridge of Henley coiling slow,  
Thy sunny waters bear away the woe  
Of this world-wasting epoch ; carried down  
Beneath thy silvery tide, forebodings drown,  
And hopes from thy calm deeps, like lilies, grow.  
  
Upon thy neighbouring hills encamped the Dane,  
The Saxon and the Roman ; Normans raised



Their strongholds on thy banks ; but not again

Shall the marauder master thee ; amazed,

The hordes of Rhineland reel ; and, God be  
praised,

Thy holy places never shall profane.

## II

But had the Huns profaned thee, and thy waves

By them had been befouled—oh, ye who prate

Of making peace, while yet our Empire's fate

Hangs balanced in that wilderness of graves,

Where still the wild destroyer roams and raves,

The Wolf of Prussia that no blood can sate,

Think you your homes would not be desolate,

Your wives not ravished, nor your offspring slaves ?

Are ye then cowards, hypocrites, or fools ?

And which are we, who bear with you ? Your

friends

Are murderous brigands, in whose very schools

Is taught a savage creed : a race that rends

Attested treaties, for its wicked ends,

And with an iron rod the conquered rules.

### III

But let me float upon thy flood again,

Forgetting all this horror ; thou dost flow

With the same loveliness as long ago,

When in the flush of youth, unfraught with pain,

I sculled my skiff, beside the grassy plain

Of Chertsey Mead, to Pentonhook, where grow

The flowering rushes ; or would often row  
To Boveney, from the royal Saint's domain.

Now are thy bordering gardens all aglow

With trellised roses ; where thy stream bends  
round

At Shiplake and at Wargrave, there they blow

In clusters, and on Bisham's haunted ground ;  
Thither upon thy bosom will I go ;

To restful scenes add thou thy soothing sound.

#### IV

I crossed the Roman Bridge that spans thy tide,

Belovéd Thames, at Sonning ; loveliest far

Of all the lovely villages there are,

Clustered along thy banks ; it is the pride

Of all the cottagers who there abide ;

For every porch the clematis doth star,

Each lattice has its flowers in jug or jar,

With roses on the wall on either side.

I paused to lean upon the parapet

And watch thee seaward glide ; a boat drew

nigh,

Crowded with those brave men who pay the debt

Of duty to their country ; like to die

Many had been—maimed, wounded, blind—

and I,

Beholding, knew I never could forget.

*June, 1918.*

## THE DAWN

WATCHMAN, what of the night ? Alas, the night  
Stretches beyond the war ; though peace be nigh,  
In vain the sun shall clamber up the sky,  
The moaning Earth turn vainly, seeking light,  
Except the Prussian Satan, God of Might,  
Be bound in chains. If not, conspiracy,  
The hollow promise, and the specious lie  
Will conquer Freedom in some future fight.

For there live men within our Island wall  
Are traitors ; creatures swollen with the pride

Of their own speculations ; deeming all

Bright surface depth, and everything beside

Their own thoughts false ; deaf to their Country's

call,

Being to their own trumpeter in thrall.

*November, 1918.*

## THE JUDGMENT OF JEHU

JUST as a fisherman doth watch his float,

So mark the Prussians the result of guile ;

Their bait, an armistice. Oh, scorn the wile !

Or still on dreams of honour do we dote ?

They have no honour ; 'tis from them remote

As mercy is ; first let them reconcile

Their souls with God, whose altars they defile ;

They whine because the sword is at their throat.

By their false friendship, by their hidden hate,

Their perjured word, their infamous decrees,

By Belgium pillaged, France made desolate,

Torture of prisoners, murder on the seas,

Old folk and babies butchered, and the fate

Of women—smite them, smite them to their  
knees.

*November, 1918.*



**NOVEMBER 11, 1918**

**THE war is done,**

**The shouts begun,**

**And all the flags are flying ;**

**And far away across the sea**

**The dead are lying.**

**Many a wife**

**Is weary of life**

**And many a maid is weeping,**

**Fathers and mothers think of sons**

**For ever sleeping.**

The churches raise  
 Their hymns of praise  
 For victory completed,  
 But there is many a one whose joy  
 Death has defeated.

Though bells may chime  
 The glorious time,  
 Some folk cannot be cheerful,  
 They mourn the past or else are of  
 The future fearful.

But not in vain  
 Those men were slain,  
 And death is not their ending ;

They loved the land their grandsires loved  
And died defending.

In us they live,  
And we must give  
Full measure of our powers,  
Lest wasted be their sacrifice  
For want of ours.

By their dead hand  
Our work was planned ;  
Now lay the firm foundations,  
And build Great Britain up anew,  
The wonder of the nations.

## A BALLAD OF MONS

THUNDER not back their words of hate,

But thunder with your guns ;

Press on, press on to Berlin's gate,

The Paris of the Huns.

They first deceived themselves and then

The whole wide world, except

A handful of brave British men,

Who woke while others slept.

"Arouse, arise," they cried, "beware

The Prussians' cultured creed ;

World-masters they would be ; prepare  
For you will soon have need."

But Britain was absorbed in trade,  
In politics and sports ;  
What foeman can the land invade  
Whose navy guards her ports ?

She thought herself secure ; she scorned  
The warning of her sons,  
Whose wise experience should have warned  
Against the wiles of Huns.

She listened to the lawyer crew,  
Themselves the men of wiles,

Who covered up the thing they knew,  
Or did not know, with smiles.

Until there came a day at last  
When she was brought to bay ;  
Her honour hung upon the cast  
Of what she dared to say.

Thank God, the honest word she said ;  
Her Empire heard the call ;  
The coward hopes of some were sped  
Who wished to see her fall :

Fall from the high estate of those  
Sworn enemies of wrong,

Who fight for friends against their foes,  
The weak against the strong.

St. Andrew and St. Patrick scanned  
St. George's flag unfurled  
Against the Dragon who had planned  
To swallow up the world.

The skirling pipes of Scotland blew,  
Widespread the war's alarms,  
And far across the ocean flew  
Great Britain's call to arms.

Ireland renewed her fighting fame,  
All civil conflict past,

In strong array her young men came

From Dublin and Belfast.

Australia heard the bugles sound,

And Canada replied ;\*

New Zealand, too, by blood was bound

To fight by Britain's side.

Then India's ancient land was stirred ;

From Cashmere to Mysore,

From Sind to Bengal's Bay she heard

The summons to the war.

Although diverse in blood and creed,

She marched the foe to face,

\* Implying also Newfoundland.



And proved herself in Britain's need

Of one imperial race.

But Prussia sent her armies forth ;

With all her subject States

She crossed the frontiers, South and North,

And broke the Belgian gates ;

In spite of her own hand and seal,

In solemn compact given,

That never by invader's steel

Should Belgium's gates be riven.

Through Flanders then with fire and sword,

No lust nor loot forbid,

She rushed ; and all the things abhorred

Of God and man she did.

She swept like storm from town to town ;

Cathedral, Palace, Hall,

Each pile of beauty and renown,

Before the whirlwind fall.

No altar, crucifix, or shrine

Was sacred in her eyes ;

Three things alone she deemed divine—

Herself, her lust, and lies.

Then did the Belgians drink the cup

Of death and deep despair ;

Their homes in flame were swallowed up

And all their land laid bare.

Trading and labouring men were haled

To death or worse duress,

And mothers for their children wailed,

And babes were motherless.

Daughters were ravished, fathers made

To kneel before the foe

That outraged them ; not soon shall fade

The memory of their woe !

Old men were slaughtered, women too ;

Their bodies were defamed ;

The Huns did all that devils do

And did it unashamed.

For young and old was no escape ;

The Huns destroyed the land,

And murder, pillage, arson, rape

Marched with them hand in hand.

But still the Belgians and their King

Like heroes fought the foe,

And eagles wounded in the wing

Are forced to fly more slow.

No nation in unequal fight

Of braver deeds can boast,

Alone they stood against the might

Of all the Prussian host,

Till Britain's forces o'er the sea

Came, guarded by her fleet ;

Too few to win a victory,

They won a great retreat !

For though the surging Prussians drove

From Mons to Compiègne

The British Army, yet they strove

To conquer it in vain ;

Yet ill had fared the Western world

Had Russia dealt no blow ;

Her onslaught, chivalrously hurled,

Distraught the boastful foe ;

So, when the French made fierce attack,

With Britons, side by side,

They forced the Prussians back and back

And turned the threatening tide.

If Britain then had had the men,

A million in the field,

The Huns' retreat had been defeat

And death, or else to yield ;

But Britain never knows her day ;

Locked in her little isles,

F

She lets the little things have sway  
At which the great world smiles.

Yet now the foe their match had found,  
Though matched at dreadful cost ;  
Like moles they burrowed underground,  
The road to Paris lost.

Then did the British and the French,  
From Alsace to the coast,  
With gun to gun and trench to trench  
Hold back the Prussian host ;

But not without the Russians' aid ;  
They too held Prussia fast ;

And little Servia from Belgrade

The Austrian Army cast ;

While still the British Navy kept

The ocean channels free,

And like a watch-dog never slept

At sentry o'er the sea.

Then grew the Prussian Eagle mad ;

Where was his promised Day ;

Why were not Paris, Petrograd,

And London now his prey ?

German professors raised a cry

And waved astonished hands



That anyone should dare defy

Great Prussia's high commands ;

And grave philosophers declared,

With spluttering and with spleen,

That Britain was for war prepared :

How villainous and mean !

The Kaiser called upon his God ;

What kind of God was he ?

The Christ who once the Garden trod

Of " pale Gethsemane " ?

More like, alas, a Fiend Divine,

A horrible Afreet

Or Moloch, asking blood for wine

And babies' flesh for meat.

For now their harpy aeroplanes

Like demon falcons flew,

And dropped their bombs on country lanes

And country women slew ;

While cruisers, that the mists conceal

From Britain's North Sea guard,

Along the Yorkshire headlands steal

And helpless towns bombard.

A piteous sight it was to see

The shells begin to rain ;

Mothers and children at their knee

And agèd folk were slain ;

And many a home beloved by those

Whose infants there were born

Was crumbled into dust by foes

Who all compassion scorn.

Shame be to those who have command,

To those who serve them shame,

For deeds of murder done on land

And deeds at sea the same !

Unwarned, the merchantmen go down

And sailors find their graves ;

Oh, long shall be their foul renown

Who riot o'er the waves.

Then hoist the British flag on high

And nail it to the mast ;

Let all the world that sees it fly

Know Britain roused at last.

If e'er it flew for power or fame,

Not now for them it flies,

But to keep fair her ancient name

Of faith to brave allies ;

To keep her honour clean and bright,

Her kingdom undefiled

By proud oppressor's foot ; to fight

For home and wife and child ;

To help to set the whole world free

From Prussia's iron hand ;

To sweep the pirates from the sea,

The brigands from the land.

Now let the subtle tongue be still,

The crafty counsel cease ;

War must be waged with all our will,

Before we talk of peace.

Men of plain mind shall rule the day,

Not men of crooked thought ;

'Tis time to argue of the fray,

When once the fray is fought.

Let all who think (as think they must,

If sturdy sense not fail)

That Britain's cause is right and just,

Take heed that it prevail.

Ah, let imagination paint,

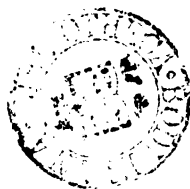
If paint it truly can,

The advent of the Prussian Saint

To teach uncultured Man !

Could he succeed in conquering France,

And then his way could wing



And make on Britain his advance,

What gospel would he bring ?

He holds the Faith of Violence,

In force he puts his trust ;

If even a child give him offence,

That child must bite the dust.

Though hard such frenzy to believe,

It is not hard of proof ;

Go, see where Rheims and Louvain grieve

For homes without a roof,

For churches now but funeral pyres,

Proud splendours built in vain,

For ravished women and grey sires

And reverend Pastors slain ;

For babes and children too, bereft

Of all that makes life sweet,

And if not massacred, yet left

To die in field or street.

To repetition all comes round,

And Prussian deeds the same,

Until the whole wide world resound

For ever with their shame.

Though war be war, if war must be,

With all its waste and woe,



'Twas waged with magnanimity

An hundred years ago ;

Nor yet was chivalry unknown,

When France bowed down her head

To Prussia, and the land was sown

With all her honoured dead.

But if the Huns on British shore

Should land (which God forbid)

They'd do to us as much or more

Than they to Belgium did.

Picture their deeds and tears shall start

From every honest eye,

And horror in each honest heart

In execration cry :

“ Though all the flower of life we lose,

Our dearest and our best,

This is the way, the way we choose,

To bring us peace and rest :

“ To beat this monster to his knees,

And bind him with a chain,

Lest he and his barbarities

Should plague the world again ;

“ Lest he should spread his noisome growth

To hide us from the sun,

And we, rewarded by our sloth,

Lose all our fathers won.

“ On Freedom’s altar was their blood

Poured out, and not in vain,

Unless we let the Prussian flood

Wash out that sacred stain ;

“ Unless, forgetting old renown,

We cease brave days to greet,

When Drake set sail from Plymouth town,

To fight the Spanish fleet ;

“ When that great victory Nelson won

With his own death was sealed,

When back came conquering Wellington  
From Waterloo's red field ;

" Such heroes must we oft recall,  
That we may keep alive  
A flame to animate us all,  
That we like them may strive ;

" Strive that our goodly heritage  
Be handed to our sons,  
Secure from the rapacious rage  
And ruthless rule of Huns."

## OTHERS

### THE CELANDINE

BRIGHT woodland buttercup, whose burnished leaves

Set forth the foremost promise of the year,

Still art thou dear to me, as thou wert dear

Ere Time had grieved my heart as now he grieves,

When memory in thy golden mirror weaves

Far faces of the dead and brings them near ;

Yet still I love thee, the first flower to hear

Earth stir, asleep since last she bound her sheaves.

The soft wind sighs along the sandy lane,

Where now the thrush, with hesitating note,

Cons o'er and o'er his part in that full strain

Which soon from forest, field, and mead will

float ;

And there thou shinest, knowing not my pain,

And here I ponder, from thy joy remote.

## THE DERWENT

DEAR pebbly river, flowing West,

To find at last thy rest,

Would I might launch a coracle on thee

And float down to the sea.

How beautiful thou art in all thy ways !

Thy moving, murmuring maze

Fills the young mind with contemplation sweet

And thoughts as fair and fleet.

Thou didst inspire me in boyhood's hours,

Thou and thy autumn flowers,

Thy boulders making musical thy stream,

Thy alder-darkened gleam,  
Thy many-channelled pastures, where the cows  
For thee forget to browse,  
And in thy cool, clear current stand knee-deep,  
Cud-chewing, half asleep—  
Thou and whate'er is thine—thy happy birds,  
That well-nigh warble words,  
Thy trout, that leap to show their dappled skin,  
Thy gauze-winged flies, that spin  
In giddy reel, all their one sunny day,  
Thy starry weeds that sway  
Obedient to thy motion—ah ! dear stream,  
Thy magic made me dream  
Of life like thee, beneficent, with pure  
Intention making sure



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Of destiny divine. Now on thy brink

No eager thoughts I think ;

But in my pensive memory looking back

Along life's traversed track,

I see thee almost as a thing of sense,

A sacred influence.

MATLOCK BATH.

*September 27, 1917.*

## TO OUR DEAD CANARY

DEAR little elfin bird, we miss thee more

Than foolish pride is willing to confess ;

Thy empty cage reminds us o'er and o'er

Of winsome ways that craved our tenderness.

There didst thou sing thy ditties clear and bright,

To keep our thoughts uplifted to the sky

And bathe it ever in the heavenly light,

Whereto, methinks, thou finally didst fly.

No blither song did ever lark trill out,

To banish fear with his delightful lay,

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(The fear of death or that more dismal doubt

Of love) than thou didst give us, day by day.

Where art thou singing now, sweet fairy friend ?

Thy pretty, pitiful body was left here,

But not with it thou camest to an end ;

Somewhere thy notes are sounding, bright and  
clear.

Somewhere, uncaged, and yet from danger free,

Thou joinest the thanksgiving in that place

Which is the bourne of choristers like thee,

Where every creature is fulfilled with grace.

## THE REMNANTS

Of all life's joys and sorrows most have flown ;

But two remain :

The sadness when you leave me lone,

The pleasure when you come again.

## EPIGRAM

“ Will marriage become more unpopular ? ” — *Sunday Herald*.

No, marriage never will go out of fashion ;

To crow o'er others is the woman's passion ;

She loves, when past the matrimonial wicket,

In the outsider's face to wave her ticket.

## TO OSCAR BROWNING

(On his Eighty-first Birthday)

SOME send you verses ; yet inadequate,

Though honest in intention, to express

Your life, its meaning and its steadfastness

Of purpose, in the face of adverse fate :

Many there are who owe to you their state

Of blessed knowledge of the things that bless,

And none to you have ever owed distress,

Though oft distressed yourself by vulgar hate.

Because this thing most commonly appears,

That anyone to whom a guiding star

Beams down a friendly ray is doomed to tears ;

For those who wander are intent to mar

That consolation. Yet you felt few fears

And still are beckoned by the light afar.

## MAY, 1917

THE may has flowered ; the spring is here ;

And in this happy time of year

I, like the birds, will sing my dear.

I love her so that my distress

Is, knowing that she loves me less,

My love for her she cannot guess.

The birds are mating ; would that we

Were mating too ; the seasons flee ;

Our time of mating we shall see



Never again ; yet my desire

Is far more poignant than the fire

Of passion, soon now to expire.

I would our spirits might caress

And of their union could express

A world-enchanting loveliness.

## OTHER DAYS

HANG up my guns and my bat and my rod

On the opposite wall. I can sit here and dream  
Of the woods and the turf and the banks I have  
trod,

The hazel-clad banks of the far-winding stream.

On a bright autumn morn would we oft sally forth

When the coverts were burnished and bronzed by  
the breath

Of the first wintry breezes that blew from the North

And whispered of sleep, cold and pallid as death.

We moved through a fairy-land, ere the frost came

To bare the green branches ; the foliage was  
bright

With yellow and russet and red, and the flame

Of the sun, daily shining with leveller light.

Then out to the fields in the open we hied,

Where far o'er the swedes and the stubble there  
lay,

And far o'er the stretch of the fair country-side,

The South Downs to seaward, in stately array.

And how did my comrades these pleasures enhance !

What holiday hearts did I have with me then !

The smile, the gay word and encouraging glance,

That told of the faith and the friendship of men.

So, not wanton in sport, but as eager to trace

The glamour of pasture and woodland and  
plough,

Our hearts were unconsciously touched by the grace

That lightens the eyes and unwrinkles the brow.

Until, when the sun was beginning to wane,

With Westering glories above Whetham Hill,

We turned to my mother's old homestead again,

By Rother, the river, by Rother the rill.

For though the fair stream is a river by name,

It looks but the width of a rain-swollen beck ;

But the gold-bellied trout are the proof of its fame,

As they dart through the dapple, the shade and

the fleck.

How often in summer I wandered along

The root-tangled verge, with its fringe of tall  
flowers,

While the lark thrilled the sky with his mystical  
song,

That ne'er was invented in this world of ours.

I beguiled the shy trout with my rod and my line,

And when I succeeded was glad of my skill,

But the joy of the lifted-up heart that was mine

Was the song of the birds and the laugh of the  
rill.

Or else, with the love of adventure possessed,

When the morning of cricket appeared, I arose,

In glad emulation and innocent zest

To spend the long day, till its cool, dewy close.

When the blood is a-tingle with sunshine and air,

And the sky's blessed azure shines over your  
head,

How far seems the onslaught of ravaging care,

How long ere the roses of youth shall be dead !

'Tis the monarch of games ; both the eye and the will

Are subject, and discipline rules the whole man,

Good fellowship too, and the patience of skill,

The courage to dare and the quickness to plan.

But though heedful endeavour to cricket be due,

In spaces of leisure the soul may range free,

R

And soar like the lark in his vast cage of blue,

Or sing like the thrush on his perch of green tree.

Had I magic to capture a day from the past,

To no spell of ambition or love would I yield,

But choose when the beeches were dropping their  
mast,

And the wickets were pitched on the old Stod-  
ham field.

See my brave boys from Liss ! They arrive with a  
cheer ;

And with Fraser to bat and with Bridger to bowl  
We should lower the banner of proud Haslemere ;

So then set to, my lads, with your heart and your  
soul !

But who is it walks in the quivering shade

Of the silvery poplars, and copper-beech trees ?

'Tis my mother, dear soul, who this venture has made,

The players to greet and the neighbours to  
please.

The Shepherd Divine of her favourite psalm

Now leads her by pastures eternally green,

Beside the still waters, eternally calm ;

Yet I think she forgets not her Stodham demesne.

But now am I summoned ; the Haslemere team

Are keen for their innings and I must away—

(Do you know Haslemere, where the distances dream

And shimmer in sunshine, the long summer day ?



A place of more charm you may search for in vain,  
For not even can Stonor, that looks down on  
Steep,  
With its leaf-latticed road, where the lumbering wain  
Creaks, labouring up to the pastures of sheep  
On the juniper down-land, from which you may spy  
Butser Hill, with a scoop of the Isle of Wight  
sea—  
Not even can Stonor with Haslemere vie  
In delicate grandeur of dainty degree.)  
But long ere we wish it, the sun has declined,  
And the moment has come for the stumps to be  
drawn ;

Whether winners or losers, we still bear in mind

That a cricket day fades for another to dawn.

Yet the destinate moment in vain would we shun,

When we bowl the last ball and we score the last

hit,

And the chivalrous contest and generous fun

Are for others ; but we with the watchers must

sit.

Then hang up my rod and my bat and my gun,

They shine with the mellow moonlight of the

past,

I can sit here and dream of the days that are done,

In the sadness of joys that have vanished so fast.

## THE WILDERNESS OF PAIN

I BEAR my agony alone,

None can come near me in my pain,

A million miles my heart has flown

Across distress's dismal plain.

I wander free, but freedom means

All that I hate ; for that dear face

With its wan pallor fills the scene's

Dim distance with a dreadful grace.

## THE WILDERNESS OF PAIN 119

Companion of my passionate years,

The desert doubly desert seems,

Because I see thee, through my tears,

A mirage, or a thing of dreams.

## HER CHARACTER

SHE'S not as many women are,

Whose pleasure is their creed,

She does not hide her soul afar

From any human need.

She loves to be a Fairy Queen

And dress in fairy dress,

Yet keeps beneath the glittering sheen

A great unworldliness.

She loves to laugh, she loves to hear

Another laugh, but yet

Within her spirit is a fear,

A passionate regret.

A secret fear that she has been

Averse from others' woes:

But let him speak who most has seen

And best her goodness knows.

There never was, nor ever will

In this world be again,

A creature of so great a skill

To heal another's pain.

Wherever she may find her place,

When this poor life is done,

She will have power to turn her face

Toward the Eternal Sun.

## THE GHOST

THE feast was set, the guests were there,

The flags and holly gay,

And over all, with goodly glare,

The lamps illumed the array,

While music's fanfarade and blare

Blew dismal thought away.

It was the time when Christ was born,

The War was at an end,

The magic of that Sacred Morn

Had bidden us attend,



Not without thought of those forlorn  
Of husband, son, or friend.

We drank the toast, we sang the song,  
And each to each replied  
To that old greeting that so long  
Has graced the Christmas-tide,  
And for an hour the suffered Wrong  
Of life was put aside.

Yet there was one, who in that crowd  
Seemed blither than them all,  
Within whose heart, persistent, loud,  
Rang Pain's incessant call ;  
For she to whom his heart had bowed  
Was near to be Death's thrall.

## A PIOUS WISH

I WOULD that I might live my life again ;

Not to escape from sin or wrong or thrall

Of false opinion, nor from mental pain

Or physical (for these afflict us all),

Nor to live longer, with more chance to use

These teachings and their pointed path to choose.

No, with more modest purpose I would wend

Through vital horror, villainies and woes,

Humiliation, sorrow without end,

And wasted work and joys that ever close

The door behind them, where we vainly knock,  
When they have passed and turned the triple lock !

Once more the body's ills would I endure,  
And the worse spirit's ; face the haunted dark  
Of knowledge, chasing what is never sure,  
Or pressing forward to some lantern mark  
Of aspiration, looking like a star,  
That guides our feet fallaciously afar.

These would I bear again, if I might dwell  
In my own ancestors' secluded grange,  
Whose architectural symmetry would tell  
Of homely love and faith that does not change,  
The natural expression in design  
Of pride in native land and ancient line.

Though I would wish to see upon one side

A prospect stretching far o'er woods and vales,  
With perhaps a glimpse of ocean, where his tide  
Meets the great river's mouth, and bulging sails ;  
And here and there church towers, to help renew  
From point to point the eager vision's view.

No vast estate should cumber me ; some cows

Should roam below the terraces at will,  
But there no stately stag or doe should browse,  
No gaudy peacock on the lawn should shrill ;  
For I would dwell there with a modest mien,  
Nor think my mansion grander than the scene.

There oft with cottage folk would I consort,

Not to be patron, but to learn their lore

Of high humility and lowly port

Of dignity (by which they set no store),  
Unconsciously deep-founded on the sense  
That labour has its own proud precedence.

So in my common pilgrimage to death,

With music, books, and friends, and some stern task  
Of poetry, I'd draw my quiet breath,

Nor ever from ambition would I ask  
Reward, but honestly my thought would say,  
Content with my own conscience day by day.

And should I be accused that civic right

Brings civic duty, I would answer thus :

" True is the obligation and not light

That we should honour laws which honour us,  
But still some gentle spirits lose the grace  
Of their clear nature, in a public place."

## THE WISEST MAN

Of all the men whom I should wish to meet

In that uncharted region, vague and vast,

Whither the wingéd seasons bear me fast,

I would choose him whom Plato used to meet

In the cool porches or the pillared street

Of Athens, arguing with all who passed,

Whether they loved or feared the iconoclast

Who smote the hollow gods of their conceit.

Would he could come among us here to-day,

Holding us spellbound by his questioning,

Until we went crestfallen on our way,

Perceiving we knew nothing of the thing  
Of which we prated ; like the priests who sing  
The praise of gods that are but common clay.

## THE SHADOW OF DEATH

ARE pregnant winter and restoring sleep

True images of death ? The dormouse lies

Stiffened in slumber, cold as when it dies,

While snowy winds o'er field and woodland sweep ;

Yet would no man for his beloved weep,

Though fallen in such a trance ; because her eyes

Would open again, like violets, when the skies

Grow blue and through the dell warm zephyrs creep.

There are no images of death ; the state

That limits life we living cannot know ;

But we remember most our mortal fate,



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When parting from a friend, who, loth to go,  
Lingers ; for then our saddened hearts foredate  
That ineluctable hour of presaged woe.

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## NOTES

### *The Conscientious Shirker*

MOST of us loathe the Conscientious Objector ; but for my part I do not believe he ever existed. I am convinced that the real conscience of every man, known only to himself, would impel him to fight in defence of his country. The Conscientious Objector was the creation of a feeble-minded Government.

### *To Lord Kitchener of Khartoum*

Written at the time when every true patriot hoped there would be a general summons to arms (unfortunately designated by the opprobrious name of Conscription).

### *To the Ladies of England and The Fashion Plate*

I was subjected to a good deal of feminine abuse for these sonnets ; yet I believe they express the feeling of many men. To the contention that it is none of their business, one answer is that if women choose to enter into public life, they must submit to criticism.

*Edith Cavell*

Since writing the Sonnet on the murder of Edith Cavell, I have been amazed at being told that some military men think she was justly condemned. There are some persons, of course, who all their lives can never get out of the meshes of technicality. Perhaps the professional fly is specially the victim of this spider; but the strange thing is that the above-mentioned military men do not know the law. Mercy is an integral part of all law, even military law. Supposing Miss Cavell to have been guilty of a technical offence (which to me is doubtful, because the soldiers she saved from German prison savagery were only sent to be interned in a neutral country), still her judges were bound to take into consideration the circumstances; and what were the circumstances? Why, that if she *did* commit an offence against military law, it was an offence produced by the vile German system of prison cruelty. Of course no one would expect a German to take this into consideration; but what can be the state of mind of a British man who forgets or ignores it? I pity him and I pity anyone over whom he has jurisdiction.



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